

PROGRAM PRODUCER POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title:	Program Producer
Term:	2-year contract from commencement date. Start date to be negotiated with the successful candidate, but ideally as soon as possible.
Reporting to:	Festival Director/CEO
Direct reports:	N/A
Basis of Employment:	Fixed-term, full time
Hours of Work:	Ordinary hours of 38 hours per week, plus reasonable additional hours as may be required to perform your role
Salary and other benefits:	Annual base salary of \$75,000 to \$80,000, negotiable depending on experience, plus statutory superannuation and less applicable tax.
Location:	The Wheeler Centre for Books, Writing and Ideas at Level 3, 176 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000

About MWF

MWF brings writers and readers together to be inspired, challenged and thrilled by a creative and diverse program of events celebrating books and ideas.

Since 1986, we have entertained hundreds of thousands of readers as the flagship annual writers festival of our UNESCO City of Literature. MWF ignites conversations across Melbourne and inspires curiosity and connection.

Held annually in May, the Festival features both renowned global writers and leading Australian storytellers, anchored by our First Nations Guest Curators. The MWF program brings together writers of contemporary literary fiction, non-fiction, memoir and poetry, along with leading thinkers, performers and commentators. Through the annual MWF Schools program, we support the next generation of young readers and writers.

MWF is a not-for-profit incorporated organisation funded by box office and other earned income; state, local, federal and international government funding; sponsorship, donations and fundraising.

Our Team

MWF's core year-round team is led by a Festival Director/CEO who reports to the Board, supported by a General Manager, a Head of Development, a Head of Marketing and Partnerships, a Program Producer and a Digital Marketing Manager. A Schools Programmer supports the MWF Schools program. The Board oversees the governance and strategic direction of MWF.

Experienced contract staff join the MWF team in the months leading up to the festival to oversee

ticketing, production, front of house and volunteer management, alongside additional administrative and artist liaison support. Casual front of house and production staff and a team of committed volunteers support the Festival's delivery in May.

Role Summary

The Program Producer is a key member of MWF's core team, working closely with and under the direction of the Festival Director/CEO to support the development, coordination and delivery of the annual Melbourne Writers Festival program. Combining creative producing with detailed operational delivery, the role contributes to programming ideas, artist and event development, partnerships and special events, while taking significant responsibility for the systems, logistics and administration required to deliver an ambitious festival at scale.

As a central point of coordination across the Festival program, the Program Producer builds and maintains strong relationships with authors, publishers, agents, publicists and programming partners, and works across the organisation to ensure the program is meticulously planned, communicated and delivered. Working closely with the Head of Development, they also support the coordination and delivery of MWF's suite of partnerships, with particular responsibility for programming and cultural partnerships.

A significant component of the role is coordinating exceptional artist care for approximately 160 participating authors and artists each year, including travel and accommodation for approximately 50 interstate, regional and international guests. The Program Producer coordinates this function, working with additional artist liaison and administrative support engaged during the Festival campaign and delivery period. They undertake and coordinate the detailed administration and logistics underpinning the artist experience, and contribute to broader Festival planning and delivery, including major Festival events, bookselling coordination and MWF's year-round podcast program.

This is a hands-on producing role requiring strong creative judgement alongside exceptional organisation and attention to detail. The successful candidate will be equally comfortable developing an event idea, building relationships with artists and industry stakeholders, maintaining complex systems and schedules, coordinating logistics, and responding calmly and practically to the changing demands of Festival delivery.

Key responsibilities

Programming and Partnerships

- Work closely with and under the direction of the Festival Director/CEO to research, develop and deliver an ambitious annual Festival program, contributing programming ideas, creative judgement and producing expertise.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with authors, publishers, agents, publicists and other industry stakeholders, identifying opportunities that support MWF's artistic vision,

managing artist invitations and acceptances, and working with the MWF Schools Programmer to secure authors for MWF Schools.

- Work closely with the Head of Development, support the coordination and delivery of MWF's partnerships, acting as a key contact for programming and cultural partnerships – including MWF's Local Libraries program – and coordinating agreed programming activity and partnership commitments.
- Support the development and delivery of donor, partner and stakeholder events, including venue, programming and production coordination.

Artist Liaison & Logistics

- Coordinate the delivery of exceptional artist care for approximately 160 participating authors and artists each year, acting as a key contact for artists and their representatives and overseeing additional artist liaison support during the Festival campaign.
- Manage accurate artist information and records in Airtable, including programming, travel and logistical requirements.
- Coordinate travel and accommodation for approximately 50 interstate, regional and international guests, including flights, visas and ground transport; manage associated travel budgets, bookings and cost-sharing arrangements with partner festivals.
- Develop and distribute key artist communications, including itineraries, schedules, payment details and Festival information; coordinate book orders; and anticipate and manage changes to artist schedules and requirements.
- Coordinate the Artist Greenroom during the Festival, including briefing the Greenroom team and ensuring artists are welcomed and appropriately supported.

Festival Planning & Delivery

- Work across programming, marketing, development, production and ticketing to coordinate Festival information, deadlines and operational requirements.
- Coordinate the delivery of MWF's year-round podcast program, working with an external podcast editor to ensure episodes meet MWF's programming, artist care and partnership requirements, and contributing to editorial planning and publication.
- Maintain and coordinate the use of Airtable as MWF's central source of programming and artist information, ensuring systems and workflows support effective coordination across the Festival team.
- Contribute to the planning and delivery of major Festival events, including the annual program launch and Opening Night.
- Maintain close communication with the Festival bookseller, coordinating book requirements, distribution and management across Festival venues.

- Prepare and coordinate Festival-week staff rosters in consultation with the team, ensuring appropriate coverage across venues, artist services and operations.
- Contribute to post-Festival evaluation and reporting, and advance operational planning for future Festivals.

Selection criteria

The successful candidate will be a highly organised and collaborative producer who combines strong creative and interpersonal skills with the ability to manage complex detail and deliver effectively in a fast-paced festival environment. They will demonstrate:

- **Demonstrated experience in arts, festival, events or cultural program production and delivery**, with the ability to coordinate complex projects from planning through to successful delivery.
- **Strong programming and creative judgement**, with an ability to research and develop ideas, identify programming opportunities and contribute thoughtfully to the development of events and cultural programs.
- **Exceptional organisational, administrative and information-management skills**, with experience managing complex schedules, logistics, budgets and competing priorities accurately, and the ability to anticipate problems, adapt quickly and remain calm under pressure.
- **Highly developed relationship-management and communication skills**, with the ability to build trusted, professional relationships with artists, publishers, partners and other stakeholders.
- **Demonstrated experience in artist liaison and care**, including the judgement, professionalism, discretion and responsiveness required to manage the needs of artists and their representatives.
- **A collaborative and hands-on approach**, with demonstrated ability to work effectively across teams, take ownership of responsibilities, support others and contribute flexibly to the demands of a small organisation and major event delivery.

Desirable

- Experience using Airtable or comparable project-management, CRM or information-management systems.

Additional information

- Employment is subject to a six-month probation period.
- Flexible work arrangements can be discussed. Time off in lieu applies for weekend Festival work.

- Employees at Melbourne Writers Festival have access to an Employee Assistance Program.
- All MWF staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check.
- Melbourne Writers Festival is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer.
- MWF is committed to diversity and inclusion and aspires to be reflective of our broader community. We encourage applications from First Nations people, those who are culturally and linguistically diverse, the LGBTQIA+ community, and people with disability or who are D/deaf. MWF will consider flexible working options and reasonable adjustments for applicants with disability.

Application Process

Confidential enquiries about the role can be made to Veronica Sullivan, Festival Director/CEO, at veronica@mwf.com.au.

Closing date: 12pm AEST, Monday 28 September.

Interviews will take place in the week commencing Monday 5 October.

Applications must include the following 3 documents as a single PDF:

- A cover letter outlining your interest in the role.
- Responses to each of the key selection criteria that demonstrate your experience, with examples.
- A current resume.

Please note: As part of the interview process, two referees will be requested at a later stage. We will not contact referees without your consent.

Application Format:

- Please combine your application into a single PDF document, with the filename: **Last Name, First Name – Program Producer**
- **Applications should not exceed 6 pages** in length
- Applications to be addressed to Veronica Sullivan, Festival Director/CEO and submitted by email only to recruitment@mwf.com.au